

How's it going? My name is Blake Chilton. I am one of the ministers here on staff. I got a call from Shea Sumlin, our campus pastor, on Wednesday, saying that he had had a death in the family. His grandfather had passed away, and he had to leave town after he had been gone for a pretty long while doing some business with our church, and had to go preach that funeral and minister to his family. So you guys be in prayer for him as he's out this weekend doing that today. He'll be back tomorrow and will be back with us this next weekend.

Anyway, so I get a call on Wednesday saying that I was up, so I had to get things ready, starting on Wednesday, to preach this weekend. I don't know how they determine that, like if they were like, "Hey, it's family weekend. It's going to be kind of a crazy environment, kids in there screaming." I don't know what they were thinking. "Oh, Blake is used to that. He does high school ministry. He's used to distractions." Or if they were like, "Which minister has the most kids on staff?" I have four, so I don't know if that bumped me up to the front. I don't know how that worked.

I mean, I'm used to chaos and a lot of loud noises. As a matter of fact, my wife left town last weekend. She took the kids and went and visited her parents, and I came home to an empty house one night, and really got kind of creeped out. Have you been there? Like you're so used to noise, and you come home and it's quiet, and you're like, *I have to turn the TV, or the microwave, or something on. I have to get some noise going on in here, because it's really kind of freaking me out.*

So this whole environment with kids in here... I said this at the 5:00, but the kids were perfect, like angels. I don't know what's going on with those kids. Maybe these kids are a little more rowdy. I hope so, because I'm used to rowdy. That's just kind of the way it is. Anyway, I'm here and I'm excited about this weekend, family worship, that we get to have kids in here of all ages, I guess first grade all the way up to high school.

I love this because this right here is the church. It's not just adults. Our kids are part of this place, are a part of The Village, a part of the church as it is, and so I love having kids in here to worship, and to get to model that. They get to see you guys worshipping the Lord. They get to see you guys with your Bibles open in your laps and listening to a sermon, and they get to live that out. Anyways, I love this part of the weekend, so I'm excited about that.

One thing this weekend is not: It's not a pass for you guys. I think we preach this enough, we say this enough that you guys know that that's not all you do as parents, is just bring your kids to church, drop them off, and the Kids' Village staff handles them, or the Little Village staff handles them, or the middle school staff handles them. They do a great job of that, but ultimately, it's still your job. It's still your job as the parents to disciple your children and teach them about the Lord. There are different ways to do that.

Deuteronomy 6 talks about a formal way to do that, and then an informal way. The formal way is you have a setting set aside, where you go, "Hey, at 7:00 at this appointed time, we're going to come together, we're going to worship the Lord, and we're going to teach the Scriptures, and we're going to do this." Then there's an informal time, where you go, "Hey man, let's just go to soccer practice, and as things come up on the way there, we're going to talk about the Lord." Or "As this neighborhood friend punches you in the throat and hurts you, we're going to talk about the Lord and talk about forgiveness, and we're going to bring that kind of stuff up."

So there's a formal way and there's an informal way, and you as the parents should be taking a primary role in both of those, because here's the deal (and I know our culture doesn't teach this): You guys as parents are the primary influencers of your children. You are. Our culture doesn't teach that, and I know there are all kinds of things trying to grab them and trying to influence them, but as parents, you are the primary influencers.

Years ago I went to a student ministry conference, and they were talking about this idea about our time as student ministers, and how much time we get with our students. So I'm thinking, *Man, I get a lot of time with these guys*. I get Wednesday nights, I get Sunday nights, I get to see them on Sunday mornings, I see them here. Some of them I disciple on the side. You know, we go hit up some Chick-fil-A, and we talk about Jesus there, and we're going through a book. I mean I get all this time with them, and sometimes there are these impromptu things where we'll go hit up a game. We'll go see a game, or we'll go do this, or we'll go just hang out, go play ball or whatever. So I was like, *Man, I get a lot of time*.

One interesting thing they told us at this conference... They were like, "Hey, even that kid, even the church punk, the kid who's at everything... Every time the doors are open, he's the first one in there. He's the kid who's an hour early to everything, and you're like, 'Hey, if you're going to be here, can you help set up?' I mean *that* kid. Even that kid you get two percent of his time." Two percent. I was kind of shocked by that. I was like, *There's no way*. I started thinking through that, and I'm not good at math so I had a friend help me. We started thinking through that, and I was like, *Yeah, that's true*. The parents get the majority of their time.

Even some secular things... I was looking at a study that was done at the University of Georgia in 2006. They did a PRISM initiative. Not *prison* like kids behind bars, but *prism*. It's an acronym that stood for something. I don't know. They were pushing this very thing, and they were like, "Of all of our research, parents are the greatest influencers of their kids." Once again, over and over, and I think that's why God pushes it back. It's one more reason God pushes it back on you guys as the parents to go, "You are the primary influencer; therefore, you are the chief discipler in your children's lives." What a huge, huge responsibility.

Some of you may be great at the informal times, and some of you may be great at the formal times, and some of you may be horrible at the formal times. That's difficult to come in and go, "Hey guys, we're going to sit down as a family and we're going to do family-led worship, just like we do at church. We're going to teach, and we're going to get into the Scriptures, and we're going to do this, and we're going to do some worship." That may be awkward.

You may be going, *Hey man, I'm not the kind of teacher like Chandler or Shea or Lee. I just can't do that. I can't play and lead worship like Bleecker. I'm not as handsome and as bubbly. I just can't do that. I'm not cool like him, with the cool hair and everything.* That may not be the case, but here's the deal: Those guys aren't Mama and Daddy to your kids. That is huge. That goes well beyond your ability to play guitar or to exegete the Scriptures and teach. They love *you*, and they want to hear that from you. That is huge.

I guarantee you that your kids will look back on that time with a sweet, sweet thing in their heart, going, *Man, I remember that. That was awesome. Our family would get around and just laugh at Dad trying to play the guitar. It was awesome.* So man, I just want to encourage you, if you're not doing that, we have resources at the church. We can help you. But just to say that. This weekend is just that. It's a weekend. It's a weekend where we highlight family worship. Okay? But ultimately it's going to fall on you guys day to day, week to week, month to month, and throughout the year. You guys are the chief disciplers.

One thing I was looking at, when my wife and I first started having kids... We had two boys right off the bat. We adopted one and then had one, and they were 13 months apart, which was really scary. We didn't know what we got into. Then we kind of slowed things down. There was like two years between... We got a little smarter. But one thing about it, I had these two boys and I was so excited to be a daddy. That's just a cool, cool thing, and if you haven't experienced that, it's an amazing deal.

I was a complete idiot about parenting. I didn't know anything. So I was like, *Man, I need to read some books.* So I start getting all these books about raising boys: *Raising a Modern Day Knight*, and *King Me* by Steve Farrar, and I just started reading these voraciously. I'm like, *Man, I have to know all these things*

about how to raise godly men. Just exemplify biblical manhood. So I start reading these things, and studying these things, and searching these things out.

I remember we were in the car one day and I'm with my wife. I was like, "Babe..." I was just having a moment, a real, sensitive, sincere moment. I was like, "Babe, I want to be the best dad in the entire world." I thought she would pat me on the back and be like, "Babe, that's so sweet," and we'd start smooching or something. She said this... My wife is so sweet and yet so prophetic. She said, "Well, that's great. Well, you know, a big part of being a great dad is being a great husband." I was like, "Ow! Have I offended you or something? Do we need to have a talk?" She was like, "No, I'm just saying. That's just a big part of it."

As I started thinking about that, I was like, *That's so true.* That's *so* true. In order to be a great dad, and to pass my faith on to my kids, and love them and show them Christ, I need to do that in my marriage. I need to love my wife well. Looking through the Scriptures, when Paul starts talking about families, when he starts addressing families, he always starts with the marriage relationship. You see it in Colossians 3, and you see it in Ephesians 5, where we're going tonight. He addresses wives, he addresses husbands, and then he addresses kids.

There is a reason for that. He's showing in the text... He's showing, number one, an authority structure, and he's going, "Hey, this is how it's going to be built out." So I want to go there with you. We don't have much time really tonight. We're going to go quickly just because it's family worship weekend. We have kids in here, and they couldn't possibly live for Chandler talking an hour and a half.

We're going to go to Ephesians 5, starting in verse 22. It says this: **"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands."** Now let me talk real quickly about this word *submit*, because that's kind of a scary word.

We hear that and we're like, *Ooh, I don't like that.* You know, hair coming up on the back of our neck. We're kind of starting to freak out. What this is talking about here is simply that it's a disposition to yield. A disposition to yield. It's an inclination to follow. Paul is not degrading women by saying this. He's not demoralizing them. He's not saying women are less than. The way we know that's true is because he gives the metaphor of the church.

He's like, "Just as a wife would submit to her husband, the church submits to Christ." We know from the Scriptures, we know from Paul's life, his testimony, that he loves the church. I mean, *loves* the church. He was traveling all over the world at his own expense for the sake of the church, that the church might know

the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I mean, he's getting flogged, and beaten, and persecuted in city after city after city for the church, so that the church might know Jesus Christ and might believe in the truth of Jesus Christ and may not fall away from that truth, as we're studying in Galatians right now.

He's going, "Oh Galatians, somebody has bewitched you. Somebody has lied to you. Somebody has stolen this from you. Come back to the gospel." He loves the church. So right here he's not demoralizing women. He's just saying, "Submit to your husbands." I love that he says this right here: "**...as to the Lord.**" See, this is less about your husband as it is much more about the Lord. In 2 Corinthians 5 we see that our goal, our aim is to please the Lord. That's our aim.

Ladies, listen. I know. I'm that flawed husband, that foolish husband who speaks before he thinks. I do those things, right? I know it's difficult to submit to us. I get it. But that's why God is saying, "Hey, it's not about just them; it's about me. Your goal is to please me, the Lord, not just your husband." This is so much bigger than just submitting to your husband. It's about pleasing the Lord. "**...as to the Lord. For the husband is the head...**" This word *head* simply means the supplier, the provider, or the leader.

Right here, right off the bat, what God is doing is building out the hierarchy for the family. In everything God has built out, he has always built this hierarchy of authority. You see it way back in Genesis. God creates all these things, the plants, the animals, all these creepy crawly things, and what does he say to man? "Man, I've created you in my own image." Genesis 1:26. "I've created you in my own image, that you may have dominion over all things." Right in the beginning he's beginning to go, "Hey man, I'm creating a hierarchy of authority."

You see it later on in Ephesians 6. You see it in the armor and the spiritual warfare. There's a hierarchy of spiritual warfare listed out there. Over and over there's this hierarchy of authority. So what Paul is doing here in the Scriptures is laying out the authority structure, the hierarchy for the family. He's saying, "Wives, you need to come under that because there has to be a leader." There has to be a leader. Any organization you've ever been in, if an organization is leaderless, there's lots of confusion and lots of frustration. People want a leader. People need to know where to go.

That doesn't mean your wife doesn't have a voice in that, okay? My wife is much smarter than I, and probably a better leader, to be honest. She's wiser than me; she understands our kids' hearts. I just kind of do things, and she's like, "No, no, no. Back up. Look at this. Look what you did. You made the kid cry." I'm like, "Oh, I didn't even know I stepped on your face," you know. "I didn't even know that." She's much more sensitive than me.

So the way we operate... I don't go, "Woman, hush your mouth. You have no voice here." I don't do that. No, I listen to everything she says, because a lot of times she's right. She'll kind of present two options to me, and go, "All right, Blake. What do you want to do? Do you want to do this or this?" I'm like, "Well, I think that."

"Are you sure?"

"Okay, yeah we'll do that. You're right. Good job." And she's like, "Good, that's the best." I mean she is an amazing, amazing help to me and to our family, but she does so great at this submitting to my leadership. Here's the deal, ladies: Your kids will learn authority from somewhere, most likely your home, and if they're not seeing it in your home, I don't know where they're going to learn it. Or if they're seeing bad authority, bad submission, a bad understanding of what this is, then it's going to be so damaging for them for the rest of their lives. So incredibly damaging.

That is a weighty, weighty thing to go submit to your husbands as to the Lord. Your kids are watching that. They're seeing that stuff. They need to see that in you. Even on bad authority. You think they're going to have perfect bosses the rest of their lives? That all their teachers from elementary all the way to high school are just going to be amazing? No. They're going to need to learn to submit to sinful people, just like you have to submit to sinful husbands. That's huge.

All right, let's keep going. We could hang out here but we have to keep going, because the husbands have a lot. "Wives, submit; husbands, do like 27 things." Here we go. Verse 25: "**Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church...**" How did Christ love the church? "**...and gave himself up for her...**" *Love your wives like Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.* This is huge. This is how he did it right here. Not only did he die for the church... I mean, this is the gospel, right? That Jesus came to earth to save his people, to die on the cross for our sins, and he rose from the dead. Right here. He gave himself up.

Men, we should be at that same level. We go, "Hey man, I'll die for you. I'll lay down my life for you." But men, do we lay it down every day? Men, we feel like we have a lot of rights, a lot of privileges we have earned. Because we're the man, we get to come in and just coast it, sit on the couch. No man, we have to die to some of those things. We have to die to some of those freedoms. I see so many guys who enter into marriage with this idea that they can still run and play like they're single. "I'm just going to go here, do this, run over here, do that," and that's not loving their wives like Christ loved the church. It's not giving yourself up for them. It's a death, a daily, daily death.

So why do we do this? Why do we do it? Check it out. Verse 26: "**...that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself**

in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish."

That he might sanctify her. Husbands, how many of you guys knew that? That it's your job, your role, your responsibility to sanctify your wife? That's huge, because some of us in here are immature. We're lacking in this. We're slow to this. We're not even sanctifying ourselves. Now I know that it's the Spirit's job to sanctify us, but we all have a role in this.

You have a role to sanctify yourself, to train yourself up for godliness, 1 Timothy 4:7 says, and now you're supposed to sanctify your wife? How do you do that? How in the world are you supposed to sanctify them? **"...by the washing of water with the word..."** That's how you do it. Do you know the Word? Do you know the Word well enough to pastor your wife? And not just to give her some cliché verse. She's struggling and you're like, "Hey, don't lie to your friends. Remember? The Bible says 'Don't lie.'" No, but to pastor them and love them through truth. Do you know the Word well enough to pastor your wife, to wash her with the water of the Word?

That's kind of a weird phrase, but where Paul is getting that is in ancient Greece. In ancient Greece they would bring the brides-to-be, these girls who were about to get married, and they would bring them to this river. They would take them down to this river, and they would wash them, and they would get new clothes, and this whole deal, and then bring them back, and the whole community, everyone there knew that this girl was different, and all the things she had done in her past were now gone. She was a different person. It's almost like they didn't talk about those things, because she was a completely different person.

I love that because that's a picture of the gospel, is it not? When we come to Christ, we're a new creation in Christ. The old is gone, the new has come. What a beautiful picture of the gospel. That's what you're to do to your wives, husbands. Wash her with the water of the Word. That looks a thousand different ways. That doesn't look like you just walk in, and you're like, "All right, baby, before you go to bed, turn to John 10. I'm going to tell you a little story about a shepherd." That's not necessarily what that looks like, but that you continue just to bathe her in the Word, and bring her back to the Word.

For me it's simple. For me it's so simple, because if I showed up with my Bible and told my girl to open up her Bible, she would laugh at me and wouldn't stop laughing. We would never get anywhere. "Babe, quit laughing. Come on, get serious!" It would get weird, right? So what I do is just in the car I'm like, "Hey, you know what I've been reading? I've been thinking about this verse. I've been in Ephesians 5, and I've been thinking about this. What do you think about that verse?" Then she chimes in, and we begin to talk about that, and I'm like, "Hey, what have you been reading?" Then she gets into it, and then we just kind of go, but I'm washing her with the water of the Word. The Word is always in front of us.

All right, let's keep going. Verse 28: **"In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body."** I thought this was interesting that he was talking about "husbands, love your wives as yourself." I'm like, *Does that mean like guys are real selfish and we love ourselves a lot, so we need to love our girls like that? Is that kind of what that means?*

But here's the deal: God has gifted us and made us, as men, as providers. That's what men do. We provide. We meet needs. He's going, "Just as I've created you to meet needs, I want you to meet the needs of your wife." That's what the word *nourish* means, to actually meet her needs. So many guys, especially in our very affluent culture, are like, "Hey, I got you a big house. I got you a credit card. It has no limit; you can just go do whatever you want to on it. You drive a nice car. Haven't I met your needs?"

A woman's needs are so much deeper than that. They're *so* much deeper than just being able to go shop or being able to have nice things. Do you know your wife's emotional needs? Her relational needs? When you're having dinner with a bunch of people, can you sit across the table, and the way she responds to a question, or the way she says something, or the way she *doesn't* say something when you think she *should* have said something, you're cluing in, and you're like, *Something is up. I need to address that. I need to ask this question. I need to go there.*

Do you know your wife's needs that well, so much that she doesn't even have to ask; you just do it? I'm afraid, guys, so often we get in such a bad habit of just meeting our needs, of going and doing and buying these things and taking care of us, that we forget to take care of our wives' needs. God has created us as providers to meet needs, to nourish our wives. You're doing it financially; are you doing it emotionally, relationally, and spiritually?

The next thing is to cherish. This simply means to treasure, that you hold your wife up as great value, and you treasure her. You love her. You see her as worth an immense amount. Does she feel treasured by you? What are those things (going back to the first thing) that you're giving up? You're going, "Hey babe, I'd love to do this. I'd love to go out with the boys tonight. I'd love to go have some time out here, and this is good, it's right, but man I just feel like I need to be with you. I want to be with you, so I'm going to stay home. I'm going to tell the boys to go on out without me. I just want to be with you. Let's watch some chick flick."

Your girl would freak out, right? I mean, don't watch too many of those. You'd have to turn in your man card. But that's what you're to do; to nourish and cherish your wife. Let's keep reading. We'll finish this out and get into 6:1, because then I want to talk to all the children in here. **"Therefore a man shall leave his**

father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church."

There's our metaphor again. **"However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."** You see how cyclical this is? If the wife respects her husband and submits to him, he will love her and cherish her and nourish her. Guys, let me tell you this: Your wife will have a lot easier time, a *lot* easier time respecting you and submitting to you if you're loving her like Christ has called you to love her, like Christ loved the church. It goes hand in hand.

Here's a word for our children who've gathered in here with us. Ephesians 6:1: **"Children, obey your parents in the Lord..."** Now I want to make some clarification, because when we think *children*, we think Little Village. We think Kids' Village. But the truth of the matter, what this is really and truly saying here, is this is anybody under your parents' roof. So if you're 18 and you're still in high school, this is talking to you, so don't get thrown off by that. This is who we're talking to.

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." Once again, it's in the Lord. This is more about the Lord than it is about your parents. Our goal, our aim is to please him. Guys, listen up. If you're a child, a kid, or whatever, if you're in here, listen to me: Your job is to obey your parents, because that's what pleases the Lord. You hear me? That makes God happy when you obey your parents. Check it out. That's not all. **"Honor your father and mother' (this is the first commandment with a promise), 'that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.'"**

Two things: It says, "Obey," and that's about your actions; then it says, "Honor," and that's about your attitudes. My kids do this all the time, and they're okay right now. Like I'll go, "Hey, I need you to go clean your room," and they're watching *Tom and Jerry* (which is a phenomenal show, by the way). Honestly, this I know, kids have no excuse now, right? Pause. We didn't have a pause button. You remember that? We're like, "Can I wait till a commercial? Can I wait till a commercial?"

And when the commercial was on, you knew you had 60 seconds to clean that room up and get back in your seat. You remember that? You're like backing out of the room, backing out of the room, and then you just take off like you're stealing second or something. Kids have no excuse today. They're like, "Pause on the DVR," or "I'll just watch it later." No excuse. There should be no whining. That's a side-note. I don't even know where that came from. The 5:00 didn't get that, so that's for y'all.

Yeah, when you're commanded... Your parents say, "Hey, I need you to go and clean your room," or "Go do this," or "Go pick up your clothes," or "Do this," even if you obey, even if you do it and you have a bad attitude, that's sin. Because what he's saying here is, "Honor the Lord with a good attitude, with a right

attitude." Not with your lip sticking out and tears running down your face because you have to go do it. No, you honor them and obey them. You do the action, you obey, and you do it with a right attitude.

Here's the truth of this, guys: All this stuff that has been given to us...wives, submit, respect; husbands, love as Christ loved the church...that's huge, weighty stuff. It's huge and weighty stuff, and it's incredibly difficult. So there are probably two different camps in here. One of you is going, *Man, I feel challenged tonight. We're going to go home, we're going to have a meeting in the living room, and we're all going to say our name on three. Ready, let's go.* You feel challenged. You want to do this. You want to pick yourself up by your bootstraps like, *Let's do this.*

Then there's the other part in here who are going, *Oh my gosh, as soon as you said Ephesians 5, I didn't want anything of this. I wish I wasn't in here, because I have failed on this over and over and over and over.* You just feel defeated even hearing it again. It's like somebody ripping the scab off and pouring salt in the wound. So let me say this to both of you: The truth is, you can't do this apart from Christ. Apart from the gospel invading your heart and changing your life and transforming you, you cannot do this, not on your own strength.

It's what we've been talking about in Galatians for like six months. You can't do it. The law was set up to show you that you can't do it. You need someone to step in the middle and do it for you. This has to be a work of the Spirit for you to do any of this. So my hope and prayer, whether you're a wife who's struggling to submit to a sinful husband, or a husband who's struggling to love your wife because you love yourself so much, or whether you're a kid and you're going, *Man, I really don't want to obey; I want to do my own thing,* you have to ask God to change your heart every day.

You have to go, "God, I struggle with this. I don't want to obey. I don't want to submit. I don't want to love her. I want to love myself. Change my heart." You have to ask the Lord to do a work of his Spirit in your heart and your life. But the great news is the gospel. We know he can do that. We know he can change us, that he can sanctify us, that he can make us a different person, so there is hope. There *is* hope, and it's hope in the gospel and in the powerful working of his Spirit. Let's pray.

Father, thank you, thank you, thank you for family worship weekend. Thank you for kids sitting in here and singing worship songs, and praising your name, and for moms and dads, and thank you for the church, and thank you for the way that you've loved the church, that you've given us this example, this model of what our family should be.

So God, I pray, I beg you that you would bless families at The Village Church, that you would do such a powerful work in these families, that you would convict of sin and righteousness, of where we've fallen

short in submitting and respecting and loving and obeying and honoring, and that you would change our hearts, that we would have a brokenness in our spirits about who we are and who we've become, and that you would change us and make us new. God, would you do your work in us so that we might bring great glory and honor to you.

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